REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-11 and 13-24 are currently pending. Claims 1 and 14 have been amended. Support for the new amendments may be found throughout the specification. No new matter has been added. Reconsideration and allowance of the present application based on the following remarks and amendments are respectfully requested.

Preliminarily, Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the telephone interview on June 25, 2008.

Claims 1-3, 5, 10-14 and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Farooq et al., WO 00/24825 (hereinafter "Farooq"). Claims 4, 6-9, 15 and 17-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. §103 as obvious over Farooq. Claims 1-11 and 13-24 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Delphin et al., WO 97/14749 (hereinafter "Delphin"). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections for at least the following reasons.

Applicants have amended the claims to clarify that the particles are dispersed in an inert carrier to form a particle mixture that is subsequently mixed with a matrix. Applicants submit that both of the references relied upon by the Examiner, *i.e.*, Farooq and Delphin, fail to teach dispersing particles into an inert carrier to form a particle mixture before mixing the particles with the matrix.

Specifically, Applicants disperse particles, which may comprise inorganic materials, polymers, monomers, crosslinker, etc., into a carrier inert relative to the matrix such as one of those carriers described on page 8, ll. 23-30 of the current specification, to form a particle mixture. The particle mixture is then mixed with the matrix. *See, e.g.*, Example 1, pages 11-12. One skilled in the art would understand that the carrier is not chemically active and therefore would not react with the matrix. Accordingly, Applicants use a two-step approach.

On the other hand, Farooq and Delphin use simply a one-step approach, *i.e.*, dispersing particles into a matrix. Neither Farooq nor Delphin teach dispersing particles into an inert carrier to form a particle mixture before mixing the resulting particle mixture into a matrix. Thus, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections.

Therefore, all rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Should any issues remain unresolved, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney for Applicants at the telephone number indicated below in order to expeditiously resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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